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*A HANDFUL
OF HONEYSUCKLE*



A. MARY F. ROBINSON

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Engl. poetry

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A HANDFUL OF HONEYSUCKLE.

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A HANDFUL
OF HONEYSUCKLE.

BY

A. MARY F. ROBINSON. *Duclaux*



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1878.

HONEYSUCKLE.

40788

I GATHER from the hedgerows, where they spring,
These sunshine-yellow flowers, grown sweet i' the air,
Fearing to hope that ye can find them fair,
Who at your wish could have a costlier thing.
Lovers, for you no passion-flowers I bring,
Nor any roses for your ladies' wear,
No violets fragrant still from Sappho's hair,
Nor laurel crowns to garland them that sing.

But these are all I have, and these I give.
True, they have languish'd since they came to town,
As music suffers in the writing down,
And well I know they have not long to live.
Yet for your sakes these left their country ways,
That, taken thence, are grown too poor for praise.

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MAIN

TO

My Father and Mother

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

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A HANDFUL OF HONEYSUCKLE.

A RIME OF TRUE LOVERS.

(After Boccaccio).

ALL lovers, all who are beloved,
All followers of Love's vagrant feet,
All ye whose mistresses have proved
Constant to change, true to deceit,
Listen, I'll sing old rhymes to you,
Of years gone by when Love was true,
Till through your dreams my singing soundeth
sweet.

Bethink you of a garden-ground
That long ago in Sicily,
Through orange trees that girt it round
Smil'd on a sapphire-lighted sea ;
The walls were lined with fig and peach,
Vine trellises stood each to each,
Hanging their purple clusters heavily.

A fountain rainéd day and night
Continual dew on all the flowers,

White lilies, roses red and white,
 Stood up by bay and myrtle bowers,
 Nor ever anywhere there was
 So deep a green as that green grass,
Whose shallow runnels cooled the noonday hours.

There lovers, soothéd by birds' song
 Brought ladies fairest ever seen,
Trailing their broider'd trains along,
 Crimson and tawny, blue and green,
 Some sang or play'd on mandolins,
 Sweet regals, lutes and violins,
Some plaited wreaths, some talk'd and laugh'd
 between.

They look'd so young and free from care,
 So bright and tearless shone their eyes
Beneath their crisply curling hair—
 They seem'd so happy and so wise,
 One could not dream that these might be
 Mere earthly mortals such as we,
But angels wandering in Paradise.

Yet had you been in that sweet place,
 You had not seen those angels pass,
So sweetlier shone one woman's face

Though wan and dim with tears it was ;
Nor any music had you heard
Of instrument or singing-bird,
But one sweet sorrowing voice that sigh'd : Alas !

Oh Love that steepest all our years
In sorrow, making present bliss
Bitter with recollected tears,
Surely even death thy wages is !
Yet Love, thyself must mourn the woe
Of Constance and Martuccio,
Now the last hour is come and the last kiss.

Men knew Martuccio brave and tried,
Sweet Constance beautiful and good,—
They grew together side by side,
True lovers since their babyhood.
Yet of their joy they made too sure,
Though both were noble, he was poor,
Kind as she was, her father cold and shrewd.

And they must part. To Barbary
With freighted ships Martuccio,
To win what treasure there may be,
To fight and spoil the paynim foe,
To half-forget his lady's eyes

In traffick of rich merchandise,
While she remains and waits—'t is harder so !

Once more against the fountain side
They lean together, breast on breast ;
Her passionate eyes are strain'd and wide,
Her wild hair veils her crimson vest,
And while those sad eyes seek his face,
With claspt white hands she prays for grace,
Leave me not, leave me not—tears drown the rest.

Take comfort, said Martuccio,
Think what great joy shall ours be soon,
When I return—though now I go.
Think, dear, of Love, so large a boon,
True lovers losing happiness
Miss not a thing so vastly less—
Who calls the sunlight dark, having no moon ?

He ceas'd, with grief he dared not tell,
Drew her face closer to his own,
Gave one long kiss, one brief farewell—
She fell half fainting on the stone,
And lay awhile there, moaning low,
Martuccio ! Martuccio !
Till the night came and found her all alone.

She rose, and with slow heavy tread
Went to her chamber, not to weep ;
Those eyes that looked so dim and dead
Are tearless enemies to sleep.
She waited while the long months went,
Aching with patient discontent,
Till in her eyes despair waxed strong and deep.

And all the days and half the nights
Sat silent on the fountain stair,
Till brooding on her lost delights,
Made loneliness grow lonelier.
If any others came her way
They ceas'd their song and hush'd their play,
And with bowed heads went on and pray'd for her.

Until a year had pass'd and fled,
The world again on flower with spring
Made Hope revive that had been dead,
Made even Constance smile and sing.
And in that May there came a man,
Weary and travel-worn and wan,
As one return'd from dangerous wandering,—

Came underneath the myrtle-trees,
Saw Constance by the fountain stand

With lilies reaching to her knees,
With flowers on head and breast and hand.
Pale flowers and dress of laurel-green,
Fair lily-face, blue wild-flower e'en,
She stood like spring and smiled upon the land.

He stay'd awhile and look'd at her
With such sad meaning in his eyes,
It seem'd as though he could not bear
To ruin all her Paradise—
Then in his hand he took a ring,
Turn'd paler as he heard her sing :
“Come home, my Love, come home, for Spring is
here.”

He knelt far lower than she stood,
Said, “Lady, I have news to tell.”
“Now, Mary, grant thy news be good !”
Cried Constance, white as lily-bell.
“I am a Sailor, Lady dear,
It was my Captain sent me here,
Martuccio Gomito.”—“Pray Heaven he 's well !”

“Lady, to-day the Spring is fair,
But it must know a winter's blight,
Lady, those lilies that you wear

Will wither long before the night."

"What! came you from so far away

To tell me it is Spring to-day?

Tell what you dare not tell, kill me out-right!"

"Constance, my lord lies very ill."

"Ah, Heaven!" (she cried), "my love is dead!"

Then look'd at him quite calm and still.

"Have you no word from his death-bed?"

"At the last hour this ring he gave,

Saying something—but a 'whelming wave

Drown'd it and him and all but me," he said.

"But he would often speak of you."

(Still Constance stood as still as stone)

"Nay, Lady, weep—I loved him too.

Have you no grief that he is gone?

That he went down at sea one night

Coming to claim his heart's delight?"

"I prithee, leave me," (Constance said), "alone."

He went—she sat there hours on hours,

Gazing on that remembered ring;

The night wind chill'd to death her flowers,

She felt not it nor anything.

At last she rais'd her tearless eyes,

Saw the night-quiet in the skies,
And heard the nightingales begin to sing.

She stood where the sweet lilies stood
Like spirits that would shelter her,
But she in her white maidenhood,
Made even lilies look less fair.
She wrapt round shoulders, breast and head,
A heavy cloak of faded red,
And where the streamlet went she follow'd there.

Musing—this heart I dare not strike,
He loved it. Neither lips he found
So sweet, must poison touch. Belike
I should remember underground,
How all the land and all the sea,
Lies cold between my love and me,
Would God I were with him where he lies drown'd.

And ever where the streamlet went,
Fearless through sorrow, followed she,
Above black branches creak'd and bent,
Where the wind caught them heavily.
The owls shriek'd and the ravens mourn'd,
But Constance never stay'd or turn'd,
But went straight on, towards an unseen sea.

Until where thorns once caught her feet
Thin rushes bent, and at the noise
The timid lizards made retreat,
And wild duck rose, fearing decoys ;
When she looked up, the trees were gone
And overhead the white moon shone,
And the wet earth shone, that the sea destroys.

Still she went on where the stream led,
(Grown wide and shallow) o'er the sands.
The north wind whistled round her head,
Clasping her close with airy hands,
Fain to forget the drowning cries
Of sailors and their widows' sighs,
Loos'd with a kiss her hair from all its bands.

At last she saw on either side
And all before her waters were,
White waters desolate and wide,
And here the wind blew roughlier.
She leant against a tall black stake
Of driftwood—such as fishers make,
To keep their boats safe when they are not there.

Kissing her ring and looking down,
She wept such shallow waves to see,

So shallow that they could not drown.
“How shall I die and come to thee,
My lost Martuccio?” she cried,
Then smiled—a twisted rope she spied,
That to her stake held safe some boat at sea.

She pull’d the hard rope with her hands
That left red stains where they had stay’d,
And brought the boat close to the sands,
Loos’d her torn shoes and there did wade,
Found oars and rudder, slipt the rope,
And taking leave of life and hope
Rowed out to sea and as she went she pray’d.

But when her praying was all done,
Rudder and oars she threw away,
And left the boat to drift alone,
While on the rough-hewn planks she lay,
And wrapt her mantle faded red
Closely round ears and eyes and head,
Lest she would see the waves suck down their prey.

“Now Wind and Sea (she said) good night,
Kind Death come soon and close my eyes,
That shall behold my heart’s delight
To-morrow morn in Paradise ;

Think not I dread the sudden shock
Of this frail boat against the rock,
Nor Sea thy waves, nor Death thine agonies."

Then she lay down to pray and weep,
And quiet fell on sea and sky ;
The rough sea cradled her to sleep,
The hoarse winds sang her lullaby,
And all the stars came out to see
That she was sleeping peacefully.
She slept all night, all day, and the next night drew
nigh.

At morning Prince Martuccio
Look'd out across the southern sea
(That shipwreck'd him a year ago) ;
He who was once an enemy,
But now is grown beloved and great,
Who saved the king and saved the state,
Now the most powerful prince in Barbary.

Though he is loved, renown'd and rich,
Yet often by the sea he stands,
As though his strainéd eyes would reach
The secrets of imagin'd lands.
And thus he saw a little craft,

And watch'd the gentle breezes waft
It slowly on towards the Moorish sands.

As wanderers where no water is,
With blacken'd tongue and parch'd throat,
Finding a fruit-tree full of bliss,
Strip it of its desir'd load,
Asking not, is it good or bad
Or poison-sweet to send men mad,
So yearn'd Martuccio towards the little boat.

And knowing not wherefore he yearn'd,
He watch'd it while it came his way,
And felt not how the hot sun burn'd
Nor any drenching of the spray.
At last, when noon-day heat was o'er
The boat struck sharp against the shore,
Martuccio stept therein—where something lay.

First, a thick cloak of faded red,
Then a light dress of laurel-green,
Then a belov'd brown-rippled head
With sleep-flush'd face the curls between,
“Constance,” he cried, “Constance awake !
How came you hither—for my sake ?
Or has our year-long parting never been ?”

She open'd wide her happy eyes
That shone so strangely sweet and bright,
And said—"We are in Paradise,
I too was lost at sea last night,
What? did you think when you were drown'd,
I could stay happy on dry ground?
No, no, I came to you, my heart's delight."

Then all her passion overcame
A maid who knew no maiden's art,
And calling on Martuccio's name
She threw herself upon his heart.
Then seeing how her lover smiled
She grew to earth right reconciled,
And nevermore did these true lovers part.



But in the palace of the King
They two were wed in Barbary,
And plighted with the self-same ring
That with both lovers crost the sea,
And crost at last with both together
When in the calmest summer weather
They too set sail for home and Sicily.

QUEEN ROSALYS.

QUEEN Rosalys was in her tower
(And hey but she was fair !)
 Her mouth was red as any flower
 And soft her voice as a summer shower.
(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

Queen Rosalys look'd east and west,
(Red rose and lily rare)
 She sought the lover she loved best,
 She gave her shining eyes no rest.
(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

Queen Rosalys look'd up and down
(And hey but she was fair !)
 Her hair was longer than her gown
 And brighter than her golden crown.
(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

“ He tarries long, my English Knight,
(Red rose and lily rare)
 Our tryst was noon, but now 'tis night,
 And oh but he shall rue this slight.”
(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

And first she frowned and then she sighed,
(And hey but she was fair !)
 Her turret-gate sprang open wide,
 An armed knight was at her side.
(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

“ My love, Sir Edward, you do me wrong
(Red rose and lily rare)
 To keep me waiting here so long.”
 Her voice was sweet as siren's song.
(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

“ I cry your pardon, Rosalys
(And hey but she was fair !)
 Nay, be not wroth my Queen, for this,
 To-morrow morn our parting is.
(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

“ To-morrow I sail for Dover shore
(Red rose and lily rare)
 My Lady wearies for me sore,
 Adieu my Love, for evermore.”
(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

Fair Rosalys turn'd pale as death,
(And hey but she was fair !)

And quick and sudden came her breath,
She cried—"My love you try my faith?
(*But 'ware my bird and beware.*)

"But I will forfeit land and fee
(*Red rose and lily rare*)
To journey with you over sea"—
He laughed—"I love my own ladie."
(*Fine flowers cover a snare.*)

"Yet kiss me now, my lady bright—
(*And hey but she was fair !*)
For this last time we'll take delight."
"Alas ! I'm weary, love, good night."
(*But 'ware my bird and beware.*)

With bitter heart and hanging head
(*Red rose and lily rare*)
She sought her bower but not her bed,
A runic magic book she read—
(*Fine flowers cover a snare.*)

She put her on a scarlet gown
(*And hey but she was fair !*)
Her yellow locks all hanging down
And on her head a shining crown.
(*But 'ware my bird and beware.*)

Her robe was wrought with magic signs,

(Red rose and lily rare)

With threads of gold in twisted lines

Her thrice-enchanted girdle shines.

(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

She glided from her silent bower,

(And hey but she was fair!)

The clock struck midnight in the tower ;

Demons and witches then have power.

(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

She glimmer'd through the gallery

(Red rose and lily rare)

And down the castle-stair went she—

The gates flew open without a key—

(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

Her feet were dry when she passed the moat,

(And hey but she was fair!)

She did not wade nor swim nor float,

'Tis drowning deep and there is no boat.

(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

She trod beneath her naked feet

(Red rose and lily rare)

The daisy white, the violet sweet,
Such for her garlands are not meet.

(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

No blossoms in her hand she bore,
(And hey but she was fair !)
But in her mantle held a store
Of wolf's-bane, mandrake, hellebore.

(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

She wove a garland for her head,
(Red rose and lily rare)
With grasses from the graves o' the dead,
Nightshade purple and poppy red.

(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

She stood there shining in the moon,
(And hey but she was fair !)
To some half-heard unearthly tune
Sang Rosalys her witches' rune.

(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

“ North and south and east and west !
Fire, Water, Earth and Air !
Help me to my heart's behest—
Curse the woman my love loves best.
Take these herbs and a prayer !

“South and north, and west and east!

Fire, Water, Air and Earth!

Curse her as your furies list,

The woman his false lips have kist—

Take the stars of my birth!



“East and west, and south and north!

Earth, Air, and Fire and Water,

Drive her from her household forth,

Curse her with earth's and heaven's wrath,

And take me for your daughter!

“West and east, and north, and south!

Earth, Water, Air and Fire!

Curse her with hunger, hate and drouth,

Until I kiss her on the mouth—

My soul for my desire!”

Sir Edward dreamt on Rosalys

(Red rose and lily rare)

Till all his thoughts of home I wis

Were faint as ghosts when morning is—

(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

He cried: “Rose-mouth and lily-hand,

(And hey but she was fair!)

I'll forfeit lady and king and land,
Ere I set foot on English sand !"
(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

Sir Edward lost both sleep and rest,
(Red rose and lily rare)
He thought on her he loved the best—
Before the morn he rose and drest—
(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

Down in the hall he found the Queen,
(Even she that was so fair)
She was as changed, and white and lean
As though she three days dead had been—
(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

Her face had lost its bloom of May,
(Red rose and lily rare)
Her hands were clench'd, her face was grey—
Her cold lips could not speak or pray—
(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

He cried, my Love, how changed thou art !
(Even she that was so fair)
"I love thee best—We shall not part."

A deathly groan half broke her heart.

(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

He kiss'd her—Dear I am returned,

(Red rose and lily rare)

But every kiss was flame that burn'd

From Hell beneath that yawn'd and yearn'd—

(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

He lifted up her golden head—

(And hey but she was fair !)

Then with a cry that woke the dead,

She broke loose from his arms and fled—

(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

Swifter than hunted hare or hind,

(Alas my lily rare !)

She sprang out hunted by the wind.

Sir Edward follow'd far behind—

(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

The wild winds whirl'd her day and night—

(Even she that was so fair)

She hunger'd—but however bright,

The fruit she touch'd grew foul with blight.

(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

Fire at her throat did seeth and hiss—

(Alas my lily rare!)

But running waters at her kiss

Grew cold and hard as diamond is—

(Fine flowers cover a snare.)

Mock'd her with ice in summer south,

(Even she that was so fair)

And mirror'd back her burning mouth,

Whose hopeless kiss had cured her drouth—

(But 'ware my bird and beware.)

And still Sir Edward followéd,

(Alas my lily rare)

Nor ever rested, it is said—

Till Rosalys at last fell dead—

(The fowler's dead in the snare.)

TO A DRAGON FLY.

You hail from Dream-land, Dragon-fly?
 A stranger hither? so am I,
 And (sooth to say) I wonder why
 We either of us came,
 Are you (that shine so bright i' the air)
 King Oberon's state-messenger?
 Come tell me how my old friends fare,
 Is Dream-land still the same?

Who won the latest tourney fight,
 King Arthur, or the Red-Cross Knight,
 Or he who bore away the bright
 Renown'd Mambrino's Casque?
 Is Caliban King's councillor yet?
 Cross Mentor jester still and pet?
 Is Suckling out of love and debt?
 Has Spenser done his task?

Say, have they settled over there,
 Which is the loveliest Guinevere,
 Or Gloriana or the fair
 Young Queen of Oberon's Court?

And does Titania torment still
Mike Drayton and sweet-throated Will?
In sooth of her amours 'twas ill
 To make such merry sport.

Ah, I have been too long away!
No doubt I shall return some day,
But now I'm lost in love and may
 Not leave my Lady's sight.
Mine is, (of course), the happier lot,
Yet—tell them I forget them not,
My pretty gay compatriot,
 When you go home to-night.

DAWN-ANGELS.

ALL night I watched awake for morning,
At last the East grew all a flame,
The birds for welcome sang, or warning,
And with their singing morning came.

Along the gold-green heavens drifted
Pale wandering souls that shun the light,
Whose cloudy pinions torn and rifted,
Had beat the bars of Heaven all night.

These clustered round the moon, but higher
A troop of shining spirits went,
Who were not made of wind or fire,
But some divine dream-element.

Some held the Light, while those remaining
Shook out their harvest-coloured wings,
A faint unusual music raining,
(Whose sound was Light) on earthly things.

They sang, and as a mighty river
Their voices washed the night away,
From East to West ran one white shiver,
And waxen strong their song was Day.

SPRING SONG.

THE snow is gone and everywhere
The spring is come with thrill and voice,
With golden colour in the air
And light upon the grass.
For all the world is made aware
Of Life that is and Death that was,
And men a sudden sing, Rejoice !
Who lately sang, Alas !

On black thorn boughs white blossoms spring,
And young leaves burst their winter hoods,
The barren waste bears many a ring
Danced green by dainty elves.
The throstles sing and feed and sing,
And search brown clods the labourer delves,
And wake the flowers in little woods
Where lovers lose themselves.

A VISION OF STORM.

A spoil-strown seaboard desolate,
 With wrack of ruined armaments,
 Sand heaped like heroes' graves, and great
 Grey rocks uncouthly poised awry;
 Stones from the slings of angels hurl'd
 That, missing Hell fell here to lie
 Unrecorded monuments
 Of a forgotten world.

A Titan-woman stoops and graves
 A limit to the weary waves
 That hang about, creep in and out
 Her bare white feet, like sickly snakes,
 And rust the chain that binds and breaks
 The four winds crouching there her slaves.
 The sea-surf lies in reddened shrouds
 Below, above her dusk hair makes
 Gloom as of gather'd tempest clouds.
 In her eyes that never weep
 Lightnings are laid asleep.

A PASTORAL.

It was Whit Sunday yesterday,
The neighbours met at church to pray;
But I remembered it was May
And went a-wandering far away.

I rested on a shady lawn,
Behind I heard green branches torn,
And through the gap there looked a Faun,
Green ivy hung from either horn.

We built ourselves a flowery house
With roof and walls of tangled boughs,
But while we sat and made carouse
The church bells drowned our songs and vows.

The light died out and left the sky,
We sighed and rose and said good-bye.
We had forgotten—He and I,
That he was dead, that I must die.



I.

I SOUGHT for Death through many nights and days,
 At last I met a minstrel tall and young
 Who by the fountain in the market place
 Played on a golden harp (with heart-strings strung)
 Whereat all hearers sang aloud his praise.
 But I who joined not in the songs they sung,
 Saw 'neath each singer's smile the paling face
 And heard the death-sigh in each chord he wrung.

II.

Death went disguiséd as a fruit-seller,
 His basket filled with apples red and sweet,
 Mellow and firm as Dorothea's were,
 And as he cried them down the village street
 The villagers and children everywhere
 Bargained and bought, and swore 'twas Angels'
 meat.
 But he who tasted of those apples fair,
 Haply his next did with the Angels eat.

III.

Once at the close of autumn evenings
 An Angel sought me with a rosy wreath,

The dying light flashed off his coloured wings
And burnt upon the threshold stone beneath,
Whereat the neighbours left their household things
Crying over me : Alas ! he perisheth.
But now I reign among the Angel-kings
God tells me that was Life which Life calls Death.

IV.

I sat all night long in the Chamber here
Wherein my friend lay dying, sore afraid,
Because a skeleton dead-white and drear
Came in and by his bedside stood and stayed,
And for his fright pressed nearer and more near ;
But when I saw its face I laughed and said,
Look up my friend, this is not Death but Fear.
Then at its name the demon fled dismayed.

V.

Death held a glass before my eyes ; Behold,
He cried. I saw outside a busy mart
A miserable man alone and old,
Worn with the weary years and sick at heart,
For none would buy the merchandise he sold.
Just then the mirror turned with sudden start
And showed a singing Angel crowned with gold.
And Death cried : Choose, for both of these thou
art.

A SEARCH FOR APOLLO.

INDEED I have sought thee too long, O Apollo,
 Nights and days, by brakes and bowers,
 By wind-haunted waters, by wolf-haunted hollow,
 And where the city smoke-cloud lowers ;
 And I have listened hours on hours,
 Where the holy Omphé of violins,
 The organ oracle overpowers,
 While the musical tumult thickens and thins,
 Till the singing women begin to sing,
 Invoking as I do their Master and King,
 But thou tarriest long, O Apollo.

Could I find but thy footprints, oh, there would I
 follow.

Thou God of wanderers show the way !
 But never I found thee as yet, my Apollo
 Save indeed in a dream one day.

(If that or this were the dream, who can say ?)

A man passed playing a quaint sweet lyre,
 His strange face young though his hair was grey,
 And his blue eyes gleamed with a wasting fire
 As he sang the songs of an ancient land,
 Sad singing no hearer could half understand.

Can this have been Thou, O Apollo ?

SIREN SINGING.

I WAS a poet, poor and vain.

Wandering down to the shore one night,
I saw—as 'twere my song grown plain,

A cluster of women young and white
Loosing their boats in the golden light,
Singing and laughing as though at play,
Singing till sound grew sweeter than sight,
Away ! Far away ! Afar away !

And as I listen'd in pleasant pain,

The fairest took me by the hand
And in her boat we sailed amain ;

Our keel soon grated on the sand
Of some unfound enchanted Land.

Too late I heard her sigh and say :
Cast memory ere we touch the strand,
Away ! Far Away ! Afar away !

And now I long for my life again,
And of their siren singing tire,

To sound some trumpet-tone I am fain,
For over-sweet is my low-toned lyre.
I look across a sea of fire,
Where mid the glory our world is gray,
Hiding the home of my heart's desire,
Away ! Far away ! Afar away !



LE ROI EST MORT.

AND shall I weep that Love's no more,
And magnify his reign?
Sure never mortal man before,
Would have his grief again.
Farewell the long-continued ache,
The days a-dream, the nights awake,
I will rejoice and merry make,
And never more complain.

King Love is dead and gone for aye,
Who ruled with might and main,
For with a bitter word one day,
I found my tyrant slain,
And he in Heathenesse was bred,
Nor ever was baptized, 'tis said,
Nor is of any creed, and dead
Can never rise again.

LOVERS' LANE.

As the sun shone long ago
It never shines again,
Though gay it glittered on the snow
To-day in Lover's Lane.

Last winter time when we were wed
We wandered here, we twain,
Though I am dying and he is dead,
Unchanged is Lover's Lane.

My Love lay low on his death-bed,
His fever'd wandering brain
Forgetting cold and wanted bread
Remembered Lovers' Lane.

And I have walked from far away,
Through miles of wet and rain,
Till faint and numb at shut of day
I fell in Lovers' Lane.

Though mother's 'cottage is close by,
(I count the smoke curls plain,)
I cannot reach it—I must lie
Alone in Lovers' Lane.

Her face I came so far to see
I shall not see again,
But death perchance may comfort me
To-night in Lovers' Lane.

I would not cry or fear at all,
(Why should I? Life's in vain,)
If I had but a warmer shawl.
Cold, cold is Lovers' Lane.

How dark it is, how deathly chill!
Ah God, how sharp the pain!
They say dead folk are colder still—
Grave cold is Lovers' Lane.

IN THE ORGAN LOFT.

IN the brown old organ-loft,
 Rose and gold with sunset fire,
I sat playing loud and soft
 Dreaming out my heart's desire.

Till the room was filled with sound,
 Thrilled with music glad and strong,
Sad and long, it swelled around,
 Burst and blossom'd into song.

Round me stood a shining crowd,
 Companies of angels there !
Singing low and singing loud,
 Playing harp and dulcimer.

Playing lute and virginal
 Till they played my heart away ;
Singing clearly one and all,
 In excelsis gloria !

Throng of angels near and far.
 Song of angels everywhere

That arose from earth to star,
Star to God, a silver stair.

Swift my soul arose and went
Forth along the airy way,
Where the heavens like a tent
Housed and hid the sleeping day.

Where the voices of the stars
Set the shaken air on fire,
Where behind far-flaming bars
Rose God's city spire on spire.

There the everlasting doors
Were uplift and let me in,
'Neath my feet the golden floors
Tarnish'd at the touch of sin.

Low I knelt where others trod,
Shelter'd by o'er-shadowing wings,
Lest mine eyes beholding God
Should grow blind to earthly things.

Close to me. Ah blesséd place !
Knelt the fairest angel there,
With my dear dead lady's face
'Neath her morning-glory hair.

Long white hands clasp'd prayerfully,
Eyes that love not but adore,
Seeing God, forgetting me,
Evermore and evermore.

Straight I rose before the Throne
(Only her I saw) to say
(But I thought of her alone)
In excelsis gloria !

Round my lady turn'd all white,
With wide eyes devoid of prayer,
On her lips the anthem died
And the halo on her hair.

Turn'd and stretch'd her arms to me
Bent her face down—

All was gone.

And the silence seemed to be
Thunder, where I sat alone.

* * * *

Through the night the music ran
From my fingers all in vain.
And I doubt if any can
Bring that vision back again.

A DIALOGUE.

She. The dandelions in the grass
Are blown to fairies' clocks,
On this green bank I pluckt (Alas)
The last of lady-smocks,

He. Let them die,
What care I?
Roses come when field flowers pass.

She. But these sun-sated sultry hours
Will make your roses fall,
Their large wide-open crimson flowers
Must die like daisies small.

He. Sweet as yet !
I'll forget
(When they die) they lived at all !

DEATH'S PARADISE.

I KNOW a quiet country full of ease,
Nor weariness, desire, nor any pain
Ever shall come again
To them that rest therein and dwell at peace.

There nevermore through any lane or town
The wayworn weary feet of men shall fare
Under a load of care,
But everyone shall lay his burthen down.

And there my love and I will lie and sleep,
Lost in a shadowy palace underground.
Nevermore sight nor sound
Nor memory of earth shall sink so deep.

IN APOLLO'S GARDEN.

In King Apollo's garden
 About the summer's prime,
 When plums and peaches harden
 Before their melting-time,
 I love to stray the live-long day because no other-
 where
 The paths are made so dark with shade, the plots so
 fresh and fair.
 Where the coolest shade is,
 Where clear the waters flow,
 Poets lead fair ladies
 They sang of long ago ;
Sont tous amans fidèles
Chantant au bord des eaulx,
Les belles damoiselles,
Les beaulx damoiseaulx.

There the rose-tree's top is
 Aflame with whites and reds,
 There the crimson poppies
 Hang their heavy heads,
 There each must find, made to his mind, some
 flower above the rest,

Some bloom to praise above the bays that shine on
brow and breast.

Some loiter where the scented
Green myrtle branches blow,
And some where snowy-tented
Bent lilies list to grow ;
Plus que les fleurs sont belles,
Plus que les lys sont beaulx,
Les doulces damoiselles,
Les preulx damoiseaulx.

But not where gown and wimple,
Betray where ladies pass,
My wind-flower frail and simple,
Grows with the growing grass,
The wind one day from far away the seed brought
hitherward,
And now in play whirls as it may the white leaves
on the sward.

Let the blossoms wither,
They best beseem me so,
But what wind brought me hither?
And whither shall I go?
Où les amans fidèles
Chantent au bord des eaulx,
Que belles damoiselles !
Que beaulx damoiseaulx !

THE STREET SINGER.

OUT in the Street,
In the rain and snow
In the wind and sleet,
She never paused till her stumbling feet
Refused at length to go.

Under the lamp
She stood in the light,
Her thin dress damp,
Her thin limbs weary with cold and cramp,
Her thin cheeks worn and white.

Her rough loose hair
In a red sun-flush
Bound a face once fair,
Whose eyes burn dry all their tears for fear
They should ruin a painted blush.

She is lawless and wild,
Yet, pity for such,
She was some mother's child,

Those thin, loose lips must have prayed or smiled
Before they laughed too much.

But hark ! All around
The Angels rejoice,
For lo, they have found,
Rapture and colour, sweet odours and sound,
All in a woman's voice !



Ah, sing on and teach
Me a dream too sweet
For the wisdom of speech.
The Tantalus-apples I never could reach,
Fling plenteously down at my feet.

A paltry song
She is singing for bread,
Singing loud and long,
Crying for help and pity for wrong,
Giving us heaven instead.

Does she know how divine
She is,—singing for pelf
With her eyes ashine?
Or chalice-wise holds she the sacred wine
That saveth all but itself?

Or is she indeed
Too vile for His choice
Who, flinging the weed
Aside, as befits it, yet gathers for seed
Her voice and the soul in her voice?

A GREY DAY.

I WAIT alone in a stranger's land,
By unremembered floods I stand,
 Whose shores unhaunted are.
I sorrow and who shall comfort me?
The wide grey sky or the wide grey sea,
 Or Love that lingers afar?

But Love has no help for my heart's behoof,
The sky is flat as a prison-roof,
 Hopeless of moon or star.
Oh sea take my heart in thy waves and beat
Its passion out at the tardy feet
 Of Love that lingers afar.

Thou shouldst not sorrow, sad wind, but I,
But I, oh I, for canst thou not fly
 And follow thy wish over border and bar.
Thou soulless wind canst arise and go
While my wild desire is too weakly and slow
 To reach him who lingers afar.

PARADISE FANCIES.

I.

LAST night I met mine own true love
Walking in Paradise,
A halo shone above his hair
A glory in his eyes.

We sat and sang in alleys green
And heard the angels play,
Believe me, this was true last night
Though it is false to-day.

II.

Through Paradise garden
A minstrel strays,
An old golden viol
For ever he plays.

Birds fly to his head,
Beasts lie at his feet,
For none of God's angels
Make music so sweet.

And here, far from Zion
And lonely and mute,
I listen and long
For my heart is the lute.

III.

Sing, oh the flowers in Paradise
Rose, lily and girasole !
In all the fields of Paradise
Every flower is a soul.

A climbing bindweed you are there
With petals lily fine,
Around my rose-bush fragrant-fair
Your tendrils twist and twine.

Too close those slender tendrils cling,
Their sweet embrace is Death.
But o'er my dead red roses swing,
Your lilies wreath on wreath.

IV.

On the topmost branch of the Tree of Life
There hung a ripe red apple,
D

The angels singing underneath
All praised its crimson dapple.

They plucked it once to play at ball,
But 'mid the shouts and laughter
The apple fell o'er Heaven's edge,
Sad angels looking after.

E'en while at ease to see it rest
Beside a peaceful chapel,
An old priest flung it farther still,
"Bah, what a battered apple!"

LOVE STRONGER THAN DEATH.

I DREAMED my Lady and I were dead
 And dust was either heart ;
 Our bodies in one grave were laid,
 Our souls went far apart,
 Hers with the saints for aye to dwell
 And mine to lie and pine in Hell.

But when my Lady looked for me
 And found her quest in vain,
 For all that blessed company
 She nothing knew but pain.
 She cried : " How feigned your praising is !
 Your God is love, and love I miss."

The hills whereon her tear-drops fell
 Were white with lily-flowers,
 They made the burning caves of Hell
 As green as Eden-bowers,
 Unloosed my tongue, my fetters broke,
 " Praised be love," I cried and woke.

DAWN.

THERE is no bird as yet awake,
The earth is drunk with night,
The hollow heavens hold in check
A wave of opal light.

Unearthly light ! The stars are set
That saw the moon's decline,
The sun is not arisen yet,
And still these heavens shine !

The light wave swells from sky to sward,
The dull mists roll away,
Lo ! at the East a flaming sword
And re-arisen Day !

WILL.

THE world is a garment for me to wear
The days are my glance and the dark my hair.

Alone in the kingdom of space I stand
With Hell and Heaven in either hand.

Life is the smile, Death the sigh of me,
Who was, who am, who ever shall be.

Men and their gods pass away, but still
I am maker and end, I am God, I am Will.

SWAN SONG.

IN the night I rose and looked out,
The sky was mirky and gray,
The waters shone white as a shroud
Where never a moonbeam lay.
I thought a dappled white cloud
Had fallen into the bay,
But a flock of swans were floating about,
Floating and sailing away.

I woke with the East on fire,
I waken'd at break of day,
But a whirling misty spire
Hid all but a trailing ray.
The mist came nigher and nigher
Wheeling out of the bay ;
The swans were flying and rising higher,
Rising and flying away.

These swans so snowy and white,
Are the fishers' souls—men say,

They stand with God's throne in sight
Hearing the angels play.
They stand by a sea of light
And dream of our changing bay,
And out of heaven they come in the night,
And go with the night away.

SONG.

A YEAR ago in Italy

It was as heavenly-fair a night,
The moon shone out so large and white,
We looked and wondered, I and She.

We listened in the garden ways,
One nightingale sang all alone,
Far off the others heard the tone
And filled the world with choral praise.

Within a month the moon was dead,
The nightingales sped south away,
Love liked the cold no more than they,
Shook out his rosy wings and fled.

COCKAYNE COUNTRY.

“ Far in the sea by West Spain,
 Lies a londe ihote Cockayne,
 There n’is under heaven-ryke,
 Of wel of goodness it y-like.”

Medieval Romance.

NEAR where yonder evening star
 Makes a glory in the air,
 Lies a land dream-found and far
 Where it is light alway.
 There those lovely ghosts repair
 Who in Sleep’s enchantment are,
 In Cockayne dwell all things fair.
 (But it is far away.)

Through the gates—a goodly sight—
 Troops of men and maidens come,
 There shut out from Heaven at night,
 Belated angels stray ;
 Down those wide-arched groves they roam
 Through a land of great delight,
 Dreaming they are safe at home.
 (But it is far away.)

There the leaves of all the trees
Written are with a running rhyme,
There all poets live at peace,
And lovers are true they say.
Earth in that unwinter'd clime,
Like a star incarnate sees
The glory of her future time,
(But it is far away.)

Hard to find as it is far !
Dark nights shroud its brilliance rare,
Crouching round the cloudy bar
Under the wings of day.
But if thither ye will fare,
Love and Death the pilots are,
Might either one convey me there !
(But it is far away.)

LETHE.

COME with me to Lethe-lake,
Come, since Love is o'er,
He whose thirst those waters slake,
Thirsteth nevermore.
There the sleepy hemlock grows
In the night shade ranks,
Crimson poppies rows on rows
Flush its quiet banks.

Drink with me of Lethe-lake
Deep and deeper yet,
Drink with me for dead Love's sake,
Drink till we forget.
Since our roses are all dead,
Lost our laurel-boughs,
Let these poppies hang instead
Round our aching brows.

WINTER AND SPRING.

SHOUT and sing for the Spring is here !
Laugh and dance, for Winter's away !
Snow laps him round on his icy bier
Where cold winds mourn for him night and day.
Though he has been so slow to die,
At last, at last we hail his death ;
His kingly state is all laid by
And in his room Spring flourisheth.

Sing if you will that Spring is here,
But heave a sigh for Winter away ;
Poor Winter that was Spring last year,
Though now he lies so cold and gray.
For still and dead as he doth lie,
Struck to the heart with Spring's first breath,
Shall this young year and Thou and I,
With all our singing, dumb in death.

A BALLAD OF LOST LOVERS.

BEYOND the end of Paradise
 Where never mortal may repair,
 A phantom-haunted forest lies
 With twisted branches always bare,
 And here unhappy lovers fare
 And evermore complain their lot,
 Ah ! pity them that wander there,
Half-remembered and half-forgot.

There Orpheus leaves his lute and cries
 No more on Eurydice the fair,
 There silent Sappho sits and sighs,
 Sad as the violets in her hair,
 And pale Francesca's heart-strings stir,
 (She knows not why) if Launcelot
 Look round, and dead days call to her
Half-remembered and half-forgot.

There Jason walks with coward eyes
 Bent down yet seeing everywhere
 How fiery-vested Glaucé dies,
 And white Medea's wild despair,

Fair Rosamond and French Heaulmière,
And he who sang the queenly Scot,
Meet many another wanderer
Half-remembered and half-forgot.

Alas! they never shall arise
Nor leave this lonely limbo where
They share not in our common skies,
And know not of our sunlit air;
They had their time for work and prayer,
For hope and help, but used them not,
Or, if they dreamed that such things were,
Half-remembered and half-forgot.

ENVOY.

Lovers, I pray ye think whene'er
Your youth is proud and passion-hot,
How Love itself may turn a care
Half-remembered and half-forgot.

LOVE'S EPIPHANY.

TREAD softly here—for Love has pass'd this way !
Ay, even while I laughed to scorn His name
And mock'd aloud : There is no Love ! Love came.
The air was glorious with an added day,
I saw the heavens opened far away,
And forth with bright blown hair and eyes a flame,
With lyre-shaped wings, filled with the wind's acclaim,
Flew Love and deigned a moment here to stay.

I fell upon my face and cried in fear,
Oh Love ! Love ! Love ! my King and God !
But when I look'd He was no longer near.
Since then I watch beside this grass He trod,
And pray all day all night, for any pain
Love can inflict, so He will come again.

ADVENT.

AWAKE ! Arise !

What sudden trumpet tone
Calls to the sleeping winds and bids them rise ?
What warning voice to the dumb night out cries
And finds a far off echo in mine own ?
Is this the Day of Judgment ? That the groan
Of troubled thunder ousted from the skies ?
Or louder than all earth's death agonies,
Hoarse wailing of the huddled souls that moan ?

Alas ! Alas ! Sharp pang of prophesying !
In mine own voice I hear strange spirits crying
Awake ! Arise ! and yet no man hath heard.
Arise, sleep-drunken world, thine End defying,
While in my heart the unutterable word
Burns, driven to the hilt, a fiery sword.

SONNET.

GOD sent a poet to reform His earth.
But when he came and found it cold and poor,
Harsh and unlovely, where each prosperous boor
Held poets light for all their heavenly birth,
He thought—Myself can make one better worth
The living in than this—full of old lore,
Music and light and love, where Saints adore
And Angels, all within mine own soul's girth.

But when at last he came to die, his soul
Saw Earth (flying past to Heaven) with new love,
And all the unused passion in him cried :
O God, your Heaven I know and weary of.
Give me this world to work in and make whole,
God spoke : Therein, fool, thou hast lived and died !

A DREAMER.

How peacefully she sleeps with close-shut eyes
That cozen no one now ; I, whom they lured,
Resolved their treacherous smiling should be cured ;
When my knife's hilt caught some fringe-fooleries,
And shook the cushion where her gold head lies.
Then " Love " she sighed and pouted kiss-assured,
As though some fallen angel, hell-inured,
Dreamed in his sleep and cried on Paradise.

She smiled asleep and sighed, " Love ! Love," she
sighed.

I heard, my arm dropt powerless to my side
And in my heart a hundred voices cried
How well we loved each other long ago.
Now while she sleeps I can forgive her—So
Good-bye my dear—the world is wide—I go.



THE LAUREL BEARER.

(For a Picture.)

THE bells to-day ring welcomes through the town,
As slowly down the sunny, crowded ways,
Where country folk compare old holidays,
I bear these laurels for the victor's crown.
Strange—that for this men lay life gladly down,
That from the cool growth of these unknown sprays,
Their hands may grasp a weight of withering bays,
Dead emblems of immortalized renown !

King Love, arise in glory and refute
These hollow claims of honour born of harm !
Stand forth with life's elixir in thine eyes
God's poet, with our heart-strings for thy lute
Who changest all our sorrow to a psalm
That listening angels learn in Paradise.

LOVE, DEATH AND ART.

LORD, give me Love ! give me the silent bliss
 Of meeting souls, of answering eyes and hands ;
 The comfort of one heart that understands ;
 The thrill and rapture of Love's sealing kiss.
 Or grant me—lest I weary of all this—
 The quiet of Death's unimagined lands,
 Wherein the longed-for Tree of Knowledge stands,
 Where Thou art, Lord—and the great mysteries.

Nay let me sing, my God and I'll forego,
 Love's smiling mouth, Death's sweetlier smiling
 eyes,
 Better my life long mourn in glorious woe,
 Than love unheard in a mute Paradise—
 For no grief, no despair, can quail me long,
 While I can make these sweet to me in song.

FONS VITÆ.

I.

I LAY adreaming near a stream's well-head,
Full of clear waters cool beyond compare ;
My fain lips met a fresher likeness there,
But drank a draught as salt as tears new-shed.
And, knowing from no sea the stream was fed,
I marvelled greatly, when I grew aware
How wearily a way-worn people fare
For evermore beside that river's bed.

'Then silently as walk the fleshless dead
They went along, and each one on his head
Held straight a water-jar (no two the same,
Yet e'en the least a burthen hard to bear),
And each when to the river's brink he came,
Poured from his urn its weight of water there.

II.

I SAW them pass me, ghostly, hollow-eyed,
With faces dreamy-still, forlorn of pain,
And did not dare to break their solemn chain
Till, bold with fear, I thought : Whate'er betide
This secret I must learn—and trembling cried :
Oh ye wind-walking wanderers I am fain
To know ye and your fate, are ye dead men ?
Or exile souls whose bodies have not died ?

Then one made answer : We are they that grieved
Through God's decree, that grieved and murmured
not,

Nor would forestall the end that He reprieved,
And after Death, ere Life be quite forgot
We gather all our outgrown loss and fears
And feed the stream of Life with these our tears.

PAST AND PRESENT.

I HAD great aims in youth (well, it is right
 Those fair unfruitful flowers should flourish then
 Though they fade soon) and now in the eyes of
 men

My life seems worthy and my future bright.
 But as I sat and read alone last night,
 And fell to dreaming of that Past again,
 It glided in, and saw this Present plain
 That its unbearable beauty slew forth right.

And then that purposed Life came up to me
 And shewed me both our faces in a glass,
 Angelical was his, fearless and free,
 Eager with high resolves—and mine, Alas,
 Like-featured, with base brow and sordid mouth
 Where unsuspected lines showed the soul's drouth.

MAIDEN LOVE.

OH Love, and hast thou conquered my proud
heart

That did so long deny thy sovereignty?
Hast given lordship and command of me
Even to another lesser than thou art?
Whose footfall bids the shameful blood upstart
To my pale cheeks and beat so clamorously
About my head, I cannot hear or see
Whose coming 'tis that makes my life depart.

Ah me ! my heart is as an instrument
That answers only one musician's hand,
A vision one alone may represent,
A cypher but one sage can understand,
Yet to this one as purposeless and far
As such dead things to their possessors are.

WOMAN'S LOVE.

BELIEVE me, Dear, if I my love could tell
 'Twere never worth that noble heart of thine—
 To express it thought and word in vain combine—
 I love thee as Light loves Heaven, as Fire loves
 Hell !

And while this love-soul lists in me to dwell
 Both are immortal—it doth so refine
 Thy man, my woman, we pass the earthly line
 And live, as spirits live, unalterable.

Sometimes when other women talk of love
 And count their conquests o'er and laugh and
 boast,

I wonder which of us mistakes the most.
 For if they love, what am I dreaming of?
 Unless indeed two loves our pathway trod,
 They saw the shadow of Self—but I saw God.

THANKSGIVING FOR FLOWERS.

You bring me flowers—behold my shaded room
Is grown all glorious and alive with Light.
Moonshine of pallid primroses, and bright
Daffodil-suns that light the way of the tomb.
You bring me dreams—through sleep's close-lidded
gloom,
Sad violets mourn for Sappho all the night,
Where purple saffrons make antique delight
Mid crown'd memorials of Narcissus' doom.
A scent of herbs now sets me musing on
Men dead i' the fennel-beds on Marathon,
My flowers, my dreams and I shall lie as dead !
Flowers fade, dreams wake, men die ; but never dies
The soul whereby these things were perfected,—
This leaves the world on flower with memories.

AT SUNSET.

Now the lost blood of the night-wounded sun
Leaves the day pale, but crimson all the West,
Birds, tired of love and singing, seek the nest ;
The pleasure-wearied children homeward run
To find their fathers now the day is done.
Poor Mayflies fall, bees leave their honey-quest,
Now all things sleep or die may I find rest ?
Whose weary lifelong day is scarce begun.

Alas ! Alas, poor passion-vexéd heart,
Too old for sleep, too young for death thou art !
But comfort thee, thy weariness and pain,
Thine unrewarded search, is not in vain,
If these can ease some other's harder part,
A nobler end than rest thou shalt attain.

A BALLAD OF HEROES.

O conquerors and heroes, say—

Great Kings and Captains tell me this,
Now that you rest beneath the clay

What profit lies in victories?

Do softer flower-roots twine and kiss

The whiter bones of Charlemain?

Our crownless heads sleep sweet as his,

Now all your victories are in vain.

All ye who fell that summer's day

When Athens lost Amphipolis,

Who blinded by the briny spray

Fell dead i' the sea at Salamis,

You captors of Thyreatis,

Who bear yourselves a heavier chain

With your young brother, Bozzaris,

Now all your victories are in vain.

And never Roman armies may

Rouse Hannibal where now he is,

Where Cæsar makes no kings obey,

And fast asleep lies Lascaris ;

Who fears the Goths or Khan-Yenghiz?

Not one of all the paynim train

Can taunt us with Nicopolis,

Now all your victories are in vain.

What reck you, Spartan heroes, pray,

Of Arcady or Argolis?

When one barbarian boy to-day

Would fain be king of all of Greece.

Brave knights, you would not stir I wis,

Although the very Cross were ta'en.

Not Rome itself doth Cæsar miss,

Now all your victories are in vain.

ENVOY.

O kings, bethink how little is

The good of battles or the gain—

Death conquers all things with his peace

When all your victories are in vain.

SONG OF A STORMY NIGHT.

IN my pale garden yesternight
The statues glimmered ghastly-white,
The brooding trees that haunted me
Flapped dusky wings despairingly.

Both air and sky death-heavy were,
But oh my heart was heavier,
For life (I said) is useless grief,
And death an undesired relief.

Then the wind rushed up
Clad in darkness and hail,
Whirling the rain
As a rent white veil,
But my heart, my heart,
Was glad of the gale.

The roar of the wind
Grew hoarser and higher,
Till the thunder spoke
And its voice was fire.

But my heart was freed
From the storm of desire.

My lilies passion-sweet are dead,
Love's purple, royal roses shed,
But heart and garden are besprent
With flowers of patience and content.

FOREBODING.

WHILE summer woods were peopled still
With birds that build among their trees,
While troubled leaves were all a-thrill
With kisses of the rustling breeze,
Slowly I used to pass
Through valleys sweet with flowery grass,
Singing aloud, Alas,
Alas, and Wellaway !

Now Day and Night, like hostile kings,
Stand equal while a truce is told,
Now autumn purple raiment flings
Around the hills she crowns with gold.
Now thou art yet mine own
I hear the waves' faint undertone,
Sorrow alow and moan,
Alas, and Wellaway !

FIAMETTA: A SEQUENCE.

I.

BEHIND the Rector's lily-bed
 I saw an Angel pass,
 A halo shone behind her head
 Behind the Rector's lily-bed,
 It was the sun blushed fiery red.
 So very fair she was!
 Behind the Rector's lily-bed
 I saw an Angel pass.

II.

Fiametta is her name
 And she's the Rector's cousin,
 But she shall be my flame!
 (Fiametta is her name).
 The Rector's old and lame,
 Has daughters by the dozen,
 Fiametta is her name
 And she's the Rector's cousin!

III.

Her eyes are a flame
 To fire the heart of me!

A flame is her name,
Her eyes are a flame,
My heart burns the same
The fiercest of the three.
Her eyes are a flame
To fire the heart of me.

IV.

Her life is a fire,
A pure altar flame!
Through heaven and higher
It burns as a fire
Past Angels in quire,
For God is its aim!
Her life is a fire,
A pure altar flame.

V.

I praised Fiametta's face
Before I heard her singing.
Ah me, the dainty grace!
I praised Fiametta's face,
She sang then, from their place
The enraptured angels bringing.
I praised Fiametta's face
Before I heard her singing.

VI.

But when the song was done
 I gave no further praising,
Eyes bold when Luna shone
 (Alas the song was done,)
Yet gaze not on the sun
 Lest they be blinded gazing,
So when the song was done
 I gave no further praising.

VII.

Since I am her's and she is mine
 We live in Love and fear no change !
For Love is God, so we divine,
 Since I am her's and she is mine.
In some fair love-land far and fine
 Through golden years our feet shall range.
Since I am her's and she is mine
 We live in Love and fear no change !

VIII.

Why dost thou look so pale, my Love?
 Why dost thou sigh and say Farewell?
"These myrtles seem a cypress grove,"
 Why dost thou look so pale, my Love?

“I hear the raven, not the dove,
And for the marriage-peal, a knell,”
Why dost thou look so pale, my Love?
Why dost thou sigh and say Farewell?

IX.

“Since I can never come again
When I am dead and gone from here,
Grieve not for me, all grief’s in vain
Since I can never come again ;
But let no thought of me remain
With my last kiss give thy last tear,
Since I can never come again
When I am dead and gone from here.”

X.

All the night and all the day
I think upon her lying dead,
With lips that neither kiss nor pray
All the night nor all the day,
In that dark grave whose only ray
Of sun or moon’s her golden head.
All the night and all the day
I think upon her lying dead.

XI.

Why should I live alone
 Since Love was all in vain ?
My heart to thine is flown
Why should I live alone ?
Dost thou too make thy moan
 In Paradise complain :
Why should I live alone
 Since Love was all in vain ?

XII.

What can heal a broken heart ?
 Death alone I fear me,
Thou that dost true lovers part
What can heal a broken heart ?
Death alone that made the smart,
 Death that will not hear me.
What can heal a broken heart ?
 Death alone I fear me.

✱

T R Y S T.

Low, low in the marshy meadows
 The sougling aspens under,
 Where murmuring waters wander,
 'Mid sagging rushes and reeds and sedges,
 'Mid rank lush hedges and growing bushes,
 'Mid sweet rooted galingales,
 There lies a drowsy shallow,
 Thick-set with fern and mallow,
 A twilight haunted of hollow shadows
 Where all day long sing the nightingales
 In a dream that has no waking,
 A dusk with no day-breaking,
 Where the live air throbs with the amorous gushes
 Of lusty larks and of clamorous thrushes
 Who never tire till the last light pales.
 And here I wait and wonder
 The sougling aspens under,
 With fears quick-thronging on lone love's longing.
 Till hope deferred grows faint and fails.

Sing louder birds and clearer,
 Blow sweeter flowers and fairer,

Bend down, bend down, oh ye reeds and rushes,
For lo, my lady is crossing the dales,
Where the pale flowers glow in the red of her blushes
And crimson the earth with their quivering flushes,
Bow down, bow down, oh ye long reeds and rushes,
My lady is come through the vales !



You gardeners that scorn my hedgerow flowers,
And mock them with false praise, oh pity me
Who have nought else to cheer the lagging hours,
But these half-withered blossoms that you see.
You that can choose from rose and lily bowers,
Who pluck your wreaths from bay or myrtle tree,
You gardeners that scorn my hedgerow flowers,
Bethink you of your own, and pity me.



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